

# Afterschool Advocate

*A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance*

Volume 3, Issue 17, November 6, 2002

## **CALIFORNIA'S AFTERSCHOOL BALLOT MEASURE WINS HANDILY**

California voters yesterday passed Proposition 49, the After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002, by a wide margin. The votes are still being counted, but the measure popularly known as Proposition 49 appears to have won more than 55 percent of the vote. Actor and children's activist Arnold Schwarzenegger is the architect and chief sponsor of the measure; he provided financial support and campaigned tirelessly for its passage.

"With their vote today, the people of California have spoken with a clear and overwhelming voice," Schwarzenegger said last night. "Every California child deserves access to a proven, quality, life-changing afterschool program, and now they will have it. My hope is that, as goes California, so goes the rest of our nation."

The After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002 will provide grants to elementary and middle schools in California for afterschool programs. When fully funded, it will provide \$433 million in additional state funds for afterschool programs. Schools will be required to provide a 50 percent match to all state funding. Grants will not be made until the economy improves sufficiently to provide the state with enough additional revenue to fund the program.

"Children and families in California were the winners here," Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson said. "Once it takes effect, this measure will keep California children safer,

reduce juvenile crime, increase educational opportunities for students, and give the state's working families support they urgently need." The Afterschool Alliance endorsed Proposition 49 in February.

"While this is a tremendous victory," Samelson added, "it is only one step in solving the afterschool crisis in this nation. From Newark, New Jersey to Washington, D.C. to Little Rock, Arkansas to Portland, Oregon – and in many places in between – draconian budget cuts are forcing afterschool programs to cut services or hours or even close their doors. Americans are determined to reverse that trend. In a poll conducted in August for the Afterschool Alliance, nine in ten voters said there should be some type of organized activity or place for children to go after school every day that provides opportunities for them to learn. Nearly two-thirds of voters said they are concerned that existing afterschool programs may have to reduce services or close their doors because no new funds are available. We thank Arnold Schwarzenegger and everyone who worked to pass Proposition 49, and we urge elected officials across the country to take note of this vote and support the afterschool programs Americans want and need."

An independent study of the costs and benefits of Proposition 49 by the Rose Institute of State and Local Government at Claremont McKenna College found that every dollar invested in afterschool programs will save taxpayers approximately \$3, and could save more than \$6.50 for crime victims.



## CHAMPS JOINS JCPENNEY AFTERSCHOOL EFFORT TO PROMOTE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

On October 28, JCPenney Afterschool announced a new partnership with collegiate athletes to promote the benefits of quality afterschool programs. In the coming year, CHAMPS athletes will be talking with children and community members about the importance of afterschool programs. CHAMPS – Challenging Athletes’ Minds for Personal Success – was created by the Division 1-A Athletic Directors’ Association to help student-athletes bridge the gap from college to professional life while also making meaningful contributions to their communities.

Through this new relationship, CHAMPS student-athletes will reinforce the benefits of participation in afterschool programs during their appearances at schools, sports clinics and other community activities. They also will generate excitement as they visit local programs supported by JCPenney Afterschool - including programs operated by Boys & Girls Clubs of America, YMCA of the USA, 4-H and Junior Achievement.

“This direct contact with children and teens provides JCPenney Afterschool a powerful platform from which to express a positive message that ‘after school is cool,’” said Dutch Baughman, Director of CHAMPS. “For children and especially teens, the message can have an even greater impact because it comes from a source already held in high regard - a college athlete.”

CHAMPS-sponsored groups typically provide social and community service outlets for participating athletes. There are 88,000 student athletes in the 117 Division 1-A colleges, and they directly contact or influence more than 1.3 million children and teens every school year.

“Many of these college athletes grew up attending afterschool programs that helped

steer them on a healthy path,” said Ed Solczak, Director of the JCPenney Afterschool Program. “That’s why we’re so excited to team with CHAMPS to help spread the news that quality afterschool programs can make a tremendous difference in people’s lives.”



## AFTERSCHOOL PROFILE: AN AFTERSCHOOL STAR

For educators, words of praise from students can be rare. So when they come, they are all the more meaningful. Perhaps that is why Nikki Johnson, program coordinator of the Students and Teachers Acquiring Results (STAR) afterschool program in Estherville, Iowa, was so pleased to read an essay from one of her afterschool teenagers. Wrote the 17-year-old of her experience in the STAR program:

I realized that I didn’t want to be a loser.... So I continued to go to [STAR’s] Service Learning Tuesday because it made me feel really good about myself to be helping the community. Through becoming very involved with the STAR program and continuous support to make good decisions...the STAR Program helped me to recognize my skills and my goals for the future. By the end of the year, I had raised my grades to the B honor roll, and I hadn’t smoked a cigarette in more than three months. [I had] previously flunked many classes, hated school, and actually had no intention to go back to school until the court system decided differently. I now want to go to college and major in education and minor in speech. The STAR program gave me something to work for, and gave me my first sense of accomplishment.

That is exactly the kind of transformation that Johnson and the STAR program are focused on achieving. Funded with a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant in 2001, STAR serves approximately half of the district's 1,100 students, at four sites – pre-K, elementary, middle and high school. The elementary program is state-certified for daycare, a designation that both permits funding from the state and limits the number of children who can be served. Consequently the program has a long waiting list.

In addition to the student afterschool programs, STAR runs a community education initiative aimed at adults, as well as a series of community events designed to bring various parts of the community together in the school setting.

The afterschool program's daily activities include homework assistance and a variety of activities tailored to the age groups at each site. The service learning component challenges participating students to spend 30 hours a year in service to their communities. Projects have included raking leaves for elderly residents, collecting food for neighborhood food pantries, reading to younger students, volunteering at middle and elementary schools, and helping organize a community vigil against abuse and sexual assault. "We have 60 of our kids working in the service-learning program," Johnson says. "We started the program because a lot of our kids had no extracurriculars at all, and this was a way for them to get involved. At graduation, we give purple cords to the students who reach the 30-hour standard and, last year, our first year, we gave 14 cords. So we were very proud."

Johnson grew up in an Iowa community she describes as rural, if not quite as rural as Estherville, and graduated Northern Iowa University in 1999. She's now finishing up a master's degree, with just a few pages of her thesis between her and completion. She says one program accomplishment she's particularly pleased about is that STAR has

breathed life into the community education concept in the community. "We brought the community back into the school, creating an environment where everybody feels safe. We have business people come in and talk about what they do – the gentleman who runs the computer store teaches Internet classes, for example. So community members have been very open to sharing their talents. We even have a community movie night, where we show movies made before 1950. And we market it to senior centers, which bring vanloads of people. So we're getting our seniors back into the school. It's really a wonderful way to bring the community together and to build support for the schools."

For children like Johnson's 17-year-old essay writer, that support makes a world of difference.



## SURFING THE WEB

### **Creative Communities**

[www.creativecommunitiesonline.org](http://www.creativecommunitiesonline.org)

The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts launched Creative Communities Consultant Corner, an arts education, youth development and community building strategy that expands access to high quality arts instruction for children and youth living in public housing. The program's goal is to improve children's quality of life and promote skills leading to greater self-sufficiency. The Resource Page of the web site, [www.creativecommunitiesonline.org](http://www.creativecommunitiesonline.org), provides a listing of more than 40 national consultants who are available to support arts education and community-building strategies. They include individuals with expertise in areas such as: Artist-Teacher Training; Partnership Building; Conflict Resolution; Curriculum and Training Materials Development; Marketing and Community Outreach; Program Development; Volunteer

Management/Community Service Programs; Youth Development; Fund Raising; and Evaluation.

The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts, through a cooperative agreement with the National Endowment for the Arts and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is responsible for the overall implementation of the Creative Communities Initiative in 20 states. Founded in 1937, the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts has more than 320 member institutions serving more than 400,000 students through weekly instruction – and tens of thousands more students through exposure to a multitude of arts activities.



## CYBERCHASE

*Cyberchase*, a popular television series on PBS, uses cartoon characters to engage children in mathematics. The show is set in cyberspace, where a team of young heroes thwarts the villain using their brainpower. Each episode of *Cyberchase* emphasizes one “big math idea,” explored through several challenges the heroes confront. As viewers think through solutions along with the cybersquad, they develop competence and confidence in mathematical problem solving.

During their adventures, the heroes grapple with the same social issues kids encounter - learning to be team players, dealing with peer pressure, respecting each other’s differences, etc. The program also makes meaningful connections between math, other disciplines, and a child’s own world.

Produced by Thirteen/WNET New York and Nelvana, *Cyberchase* is for children age eight through eleven. *Cyberchase* is broadcast in all 50 states and is carried on approximately 95 percent of the PBS stations nationwide. Check local PBS station listings for specific broadcast schedule information.

## Online

*Cyberchase* Online ([www.pbskids.org/cyberchase](http://www.pbskids.org/cyberchase)) provides a wide variety of math-based games, activities and challenges tied to the broadcast episodes. Additional resources for adults are available at [www.pbs.org/parents/tvprograms/cyberchase.html](http://www.pbs.org/parents/tvprograms/cyberchase.html). These materials include teacher guides, workshops, parents’ helpers and magazines offering suggestions for activities that reinforce the problem-solving strategies explored in *Cyberchase* episodes.



## IN THE NEWS...

**Michigan** – Detroit Public Schools and Ford Motor Company have teamed up to support Dell TechKnow, an afterschool program that uses technology training and the promise of a computer to keep “at-risk” students in school and focused on their grades. Each student who participates in the afterschool program will be able to take home the computer he/she builds. Dell developed the curriculum for the program and has donated the computers that will be disassembled and rebuilt. “Public-private partnerships, like the one we have formed with Ford Motor Company and Dell Computers to execute Dell TechKnow, are important additions to our children’s educational growth and will help them gain additional skills they need to succeed in today’s technology economy,” said Dr. Burnley, Detroit Public Schools CEO.

**South Carolina** – High School students from Dorchester County School District learn the importance of teamwork while exploring the world of engineering at a robotics afterschool program, reports the *Associated Press*. The program, funded by the Robert Bosch and Toyota corporations, pairs students from rival schools to create robots for a national robot competition. Teachers and mentors from the two sponsoring corporations offer guidance.

The majority of students who attend the program go on to major in math, science or engineering in college.

**Texas** – Jessie Knirsch, the winner of the Afterschool Alliance’s national essay contest last May, received special recognition from the North East Independent School District Board of Trustees at its recent meeting. Knirsch was presented with a personalized Wheaties box with her picture on the front of the cereal box. Her essay to President George Bush about the importance of afterschool programs was randomly selected from nearly 2,000 essays submitted to the Afterschool Alliance by young people around the country.

**Wisconsin** – Through two \$5,000 grants from JCPenney, Racine’s YMCA is opening a new afterschool program specifically designed for middle school students, reports the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. The Racine Community Coalition for Youth conducted a survey of more than 6,200 local students in March and found an urgent need for quality, engaging afterschool programs. “The Zone will be a great place for kids to learn about the real world and make decisions,” said Missy Reischl, senior program director at Racine’s YMCA. “Supporting youth in leadership roles is a good way to develop kids who will become positive role models in the Racine community.”



## RESOURCES

### **Afterschool Alliance Backgrounder: Formal Evaluations of Afterschool Programs**

[http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/press\\_room.cfm](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/press_room.cfm)

More and more, afterschool programs must demonstrate the benefits they provide to

students, families and communities. Numerous independent surveys and evaluations have affirmed the benefits of afterschool programs. The Afterschool Alliance’s new *Backgrounder: Formal Evaluations of Afterschool Programs* provides an overview of several independent evaluations that demonstrate that afterschool programs help kids achieve in school; keep children safe; and help working families. The paper also provides summaries of several of the most extensive evaluations conducted in individual cities and states. The Backgrounder is available on the Afterschool Alliance web site ([www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org)) on the top of the Press Room page.

### **Out-Of-School Research Meets After-School Policy**

<http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/whatsnew.htm#mott1>

The Forum for Youth Investment has published *Out-Of-School Research Meets After-School Policy*, the first of a series of policy briefs focused on out-of-school time issues. Deborah Vandell, a leading researcher on afterschool programs for elementary school children, and Kerry Mazzoni, California Secretary of Education, provide an overview of available research and how research influences policy. The briefing paper answers such questions as:

- What does research tell us about afterschool programs?
- What outcomes are realistic?
- What practices are essential?
- What changes are measurable?
- How does the call for scientifically-based research fit into the picture?

For a copy of the policy brief, go to: <http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/whatsnew.htm>.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### **November 13 - 16**

The National Community Education Association will host its 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Austin, Texas, from November 13 to 16. The two-and-a-half day conference hosts the largest national gathering of community and afterschool educators. The three major areas of concentration are: Community Education Management & Professional Development, Community Education Programming, and Afterschool Programs and Process. For more information, visit [www.ncea.com](http://www.ncea.com) or call 703/359-8973.

### **November 20 - 23**

The National Association of Partners in Education and The International Partnership Network will host a Global Partnership Summit on Learning, Employability and Citizenship in Washington, D.C., from November 20 to 23. The Summit will explore worldwide leading-edge policies, strategies and practices in building partnerships that enhance student success, workforce development, corporate social investment and public sector policies for social inclusion. Details and registration materials are available at: [www.partnersineducation.org](http://www.partnersineducation.org).

### **January 26 – 29, 2003**

FOUNDATIONS, Inc. will host “The Beyond School Hours VI” conference at Disney’s

Contemporary Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, from January 26 through 29. The conference is designed to promote the expansion of quality before-school and afterschool programs that provide safe havens for children, improve academic achievement and offer positive social interaction in a healthy environment. Sessions will include: best practices models, technology, cross cutting competencies; curriculum and instructional program strategies; active parent/family involvement; strategies to obtain funding through public and private sources; and technical assistance for grant applications. For more information, go to: [wwwFOUNDATIONS-inc.org](http://wwwFOUNDATIONS-inc.org).



### **Receiving the *Afterschool Advocate* via email**

We would prefer to send you the *Afterschool Advocate* via email so that you can receive it in a more timely manner. If you would like to receive the newsletter by email, please contact editor Ridgely Benjamin via email ([afterschooladvocate@prsolutionsdc.com](mailto:afterschooladvocate@prsolutionsdc.com)) or fax (202/371-9142). She will need your name, organization, phone and fax number, and email address. Thank you!

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities dedicated to ensuring that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, JCPenney Afterschool, Open Society Institute/The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation.

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